1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

137 31 similar to caatinga sêca appear where soil and moisture conditions would seem to indicate caatinga grande. These areas are especially common where cultivation and grazing are intensive.

The wild vegetation of the Recôncavo is used for forage, timber, [313] and fuel. Only the mata is used for timber, and it is exploited only on a small scale. All three of the main vegetation types contribute toward supplying the local market with fuel--firewood and charcoal. The [314] mata is the principal charcoal source, especially in the forest zone northwest of the city of Salvador and along the Salvador-Feira de Santana highway. In the interior sections of the Recôncavo the caatinga and the agreste provide firewood for cooking and other household purposes. For grazing, the caatinga is far superior to the agreste and the mata, except when the latter is in the first stages of regrowth. Burning is employed extensively in an effort to increase the grazing value of the caatinga and agreste. At first this provides more grass and herbaceous growth, but after repeated burning and continuous over-grazing, there develops an impenetrable cover of thorny, tough brush, three to five feet tall, and quite valueless.[35]

13 Conclusion - Physical Setting. The analysis of the physical setting which is to serve as background for the discussion of agriculture in the Recôncavo does not reveal a homogeneous region. Rather it would seem that the Recôncavo is best visualized as a nodal region, with a relatively homogeneous but areally restricted core and a broad transitional perimeter. The perimeter is composed of several sub-regions, each with a distinctive transitional character. As a summation of [108] the physical setting, each of the sub-regions of the perimeter and core of the Recôncavo will be assigned a name, as a matter of convenience, with the physical elements briefly indicated for each:[36]

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

231 233 small (Map 88). Within the Recôncavo, only the eastern part of the Central Recôncavo and the environs of Feira de Santana had even a moderate number of ranches. Livestock enterprises generally occupied less than one-fifth of the enumerated area (Map 89). These properties were relatively important in the Northwestern and Central Recôncavo, a reflection of the importance of ranching and cattle fattening in the northwest and of the need for work animals in the sugar cane region. In the Southwestern Recôncavo crop cultivation is too intensive and widespread to share the land with many ranches. Except in the southwest, 20 per cent of the total enumerated area was in livestock units along the limits of the Recôncavo. In relation to the total area, the extent [311] of livestock properties varied from place to place along the border zone (Map 90). Beyond the Recôncavo, ranching is more important in the crystalline areas, whether caatinga or agreste, than in the Tertiary taboleiros.

231 233 433 As has been pointed out, large-scale properties are especially important among the livestock production units. In most parts of the Recôncavo the ratio of the area in large-scale and in small-scale livestock units was about three to one. The analysis of the mean size of large-scale livestock units, plotted on Map 91, emphasizes the diversity within the region and discloses the tremendous size of the ranches in the coastal agreste northeast of the Recôncavo. Since the number of large-scale livestock units was small and the size of the units highly variable, the mean values for the areas of these properties may be deceiving. Nevertheless, it is significant that the mean size of livestock unit was large in the Central Recôncavo, where there are a number of fazendas in the forested hills around the sugar cane region. These [313] [249] properties are used primarily as sources of firewood for the usinas

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1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

and locomotives of the cane area, but, as has been pointed out previously, they have supplementary livestock production.[4]

Of the 247 large-scale livestock units in the Recôncavo, 65, with a total area of almost 30,000 hectares, were in the município of Feira de Santana (Maps 92 and 93). Another 39, with about 16,000 hectares of land, were in the Central Recôncavo. Each of these two areas has a distinctive character: the Central Recôncavo fazendas de gado--cattle ranches--supply oxen and horses, asses, and mules to the sugar economy; the large fazendas of Feira de Santana, with extensive grassy pastures, serve the campo de gado--cattle market--of the cidade and thereby the whole economy of the Recôncavo.

Crop Cultivation Units. Almost one-half of all farms in the Recôncavo produced no animals in 1940. In the marginal areas of the region, excepting always the southwest, less than one-third of the farms were pure crop cultivation units (Map 94). On the other hand, crop farms were particularly numerous on the southern littoral, where the forests are not salutary to livestock--except swine and fighting cocks. The Northern Recôncavo, where ranching is not an important activity, had a relatively large number of crop cultivation units, as had Salvador and the adjoining coastal município, Camassari.

Relative to both the enumerated and the total area, the purely crop cultivation units were very important in Itaparica and Santo Amaro and unimportant around the border zone of the Recôncavo (Maps 95 and 96). On Itaparica and in the sugar cane region, crop cultivation units occupied over one-half the total land area--over 85 per cent on the island of Itaparica. The size of crop cultivation properties in the Recôncavo was generally small, but there were very great local differences (Map 97). The tobacco-manioc region, especially in the Southwestern

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 306]

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the responsibility of holders to colonize and develop their areas. The grants were as a rule very large, consisting of leagues of land rather than of acres. Only one grant could be made to a family. As a result the son of a man who was a holder of a grant either had to remain on his father's land or had to leave the province and go elsewhere to acquire land. The only remaining alternative was to forget about land and go into commerce or a profession. However, since the grants were so very large, the original holders were able to break them up, selling or renting parts, giving some to their married sons or daughters and yet retaining and cultivating enough to support themselves. Thus the original land grants were broken up, and several plantations were made of each.

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Engenho was the name given to the total plantation, as well as being the specific designation for the mill itself. Every plantation, regardless of whether it was inland or on the coast, needed two things: the soil known as massapê, and woods as close as possible to the mill to supply firewood for boiling the sugar-cane juice. Firewood soon became a crucial problem, one which has haunted the sugar industry for centuries. Conservation never was a Brazilian practice, and the tropical forests of the Recôncavo were soon stripped to feed the hungry mouths of the furnaces. As time went on it became necessary to import firewood by boat from wherever it could be found, which added greatly to the costs of producing sugar. The steam mill came much later and added further to the problem.

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At first the owner's house was a veritable fort, surrounded by bulwarks and stockades to resist Indian attacks, but by the end of the seventeenth century the need for this precaution had passed away and the plantation houses were assuming noble proportions. Many were imposing two-story buildings built of stone and mortar, the ground level generally being used as a storehouse and the master (senhor de engenho) and his family living on the upper floor. As a rule the Big House of the Recôncavo was situated so that there would be an excellent view from the windows, not only of the mill and slave quarters nearby but of the surrounding countryside. There was no sight so dear to the heart of a plantation master as that of fields of sugar cane, the leaves of many shades of green waving gently in the breeze.

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Frequently a chapel was connected with the house or built near it. Not very far away would be the mill, and nearby the

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

443 upper part of town also sells cloth. Most stores also have small supplies of chocolate (considered a great treat at a party), tea, honey, canned desserts such as guava, and canned butter and cheese. As a rule fresh vegetables are not sold in the stores but peddled through the streets, since few people eat them. It is more practical to order them specially from someone going to the fair in Centro. Nearly everyone has a banana tree or an orange tree in the back yard, so that few fruits are sold in the stores. The other seasonal crops, such as cashew nuts, corn, and pineapples, are peddled from house to house. As a rule people in Vila Recôncavo buy their food in small quantities, since they have no methods of food preservation. A liter bottle is carried to the store to be filled with oil or kerosene; a small can is carried there to be filled with rice, beans, or farina. The smoked meat called charque is bought by the kilo and left hanging in the kitchen, and strips are cut from it at meal times. Although the price of charque is as high as that of fresh meat, and at times higher, people say it is more satisfying. As a rule the butcher in Vila Recôncavo kills two steers a week, on Wednesday and Saturday. The meat is carried through the streets unwrapped, hanging from a cord. It is not unusual to see a string of dogs following such a person. The meat is eaten the same day to prevent spoilage, and as a result it is usually tough and flavorless.

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Most of the people included in Group 1 lead an upper-class kind of life; indeed to a great extent these people are the town's highest class, as will be shown in the next chapter. These are the people who do little or no labor themselves other than the white-collar work with which they earn their living. The men dress in city clothes most of the time--white shirt, tie, and suit coat--and the women are always neatly dressed with shoes and silk stockings. (The oil workers are an exception, for they do not hold white-collar jobs but wear overalls and helmets). There is always help to do the housework and the marketing. Sometimes a cook is employed; otherwise the lady of the house does her own cooking, assisted by her daughters. The laundry is sent out, or else the laundress comes to the house to do it, and water for drinking purposes and for washing is brought to the house by a man or woman employed for the purpose; members of the household never fetch water at the wells. Often the house has a cement tank and drains on the roof to catch rainwater. Nor does any member of the house fetch firewood, which is supplied by a hired person.

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2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

[Town Life]

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[443] the icehouse where the shrimp are kept cool; they can then be sent to Salvador every other day on the boat to be sold as fresh shrimp at the market and on the streets. "Camarão da Vila," (shrimp from Vila) the cry of the Salvador street peddlers, is well known throughout the capital city.

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[476] The majority of people in Group 2 live down the hill from the older part of town, near the beach or out along the road which leads to the factory. They are more or less dependent upon Group 1, not only for the money they receive in return for services, but also for many kinds of favors which fall under the heading of patronship. They are seldom able to employ the services of Group 3 for such jobs as house building or repairing; they must rely on an old form of cooperative labor, called the batalhão (work group), to make or repair a house wall or to put on a new thatch roof. Frequently a patron will arrange for another of his "dependents" to transport the mud necessary for the palm thatch (taipa), and there is no cost involved for the recipient; but she must arrange the labor.

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[313] The people of Group 2 fetch their own water from the wells, and usually their own firewood from the tideswamps. There are several men and women in town who make a business of carrying these two commodities. Such work is contractual. A household contracts for so many cans or barrels of water a day and so many loads of firewood a week. If they do not have enough money for these services they must carry them out themselves. During the dry summer months fetching water is a tedious business, for the majority of the wells dry up early in the summer. In the very dry summer of 1950-51, all the wells in town but one went dry. The one which continued to supply water did so at a much diminished rate. This well is completely encased in cement, for it provides the only drinking water in town. There is a small pipe serving as a spigot. During the dry season it takes from ten to twenty minutes to fill a five-gallon tin can from this pipe. As a result, there were always long lines of women waiting for water, and a sojourn of three or four hours at the well was common. Many of the more ambitious women used to get up at two or three in the morning and go to the well, making several trips so they would be free of this onerous duty during the day.

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[492] This, however, took a great deal of courage, for most people in Vila Recôncavo are afraid of the dark, and no timid woman would make the trip out to the well at night. By general agreement, the men who carry water in barrels on donkeys walked

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 8011 Bahia Brazilians 8011

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[Town Life]

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is very rough, though strong. Most of the men complain about it, for it cuts their hands when they are fishing and the action of salt water on the cuts inflames their hands badly.

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There are between seventy-five and one hundred canoes in Vila Recôncavo, of all sizes, from 16 to about 50 feet long. They come from the southern part of the state, and cost between Cr$1.000,00 and Cr$6.000,00 apiece, depending on their size. They are made of vinhatico preto, a large tree from which an entire canoe can be hollowed out. As the canoes grow older, they are strengthened inside by the addition of ribs. The center support (pé do banco) has a hole in it through which a mast can be stepped for sailing. The fishermen use a variety of sails, but usually a simple square sail called traquête. Four flour sacks sewn together make a passable square sail. The canoes last a long time and are handed down from generation to generation. A hundred years is not an uncommon age for such a craft.

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The majority of fishermen cannot swim well and have a great respect for the water on two counts: the water is deep, which to them implies danger, and it is said to hide large, man-eating fish. There are stories of three men who have disappeared in the last few years, snatched away by fish. One was a baixador, and the other two fell overboard. Falling is not uncommon, for often a man steps on a small fish on the bottom of the canoe or simply slips on the wet wood, loses his balance, and goes overboard, as the canoes are narrow-beamed and unstable. In their canoes they are fearless, and will go anywhere in any weather. Severe storms which arise suddenly are ridden out in the canoe, which generally lies at anchor while the men lie under cover of the sail, peering out occasionally to see if the weather is clearing. Many of them, however, become violently ill on a larger boat during a storm.

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Winter is the most productive season for fishing, although the most uncomfortable. There are many storms, and the rains are more or less constant. But the fishermen say that the mixture of salt water with the fresh water from small rivers emptying into the bay seems to produce many more fish than in the summer months. The fishermen dress only in a pair of shorts and a straw hat when fishing, and remain in the cold rain for hours on end. Colds are common among them, as is rheumatism among the older men.

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There is always a market for fish. There is a discussion currently going on in Vila Recôncavo, for some of the older

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